



Florida House of Representatives

Jimmy Patronis

Representative, District 6

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 27, 2009

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BILL AMENDING MEMBERSHIP OF MEDICAID LOW-INCOME POOL COUNCIL HEADS TO THE GOVERNOR FOR APPROVAL

~Bill protects Florida's limited funds from the influence of Tallahassee insiders ~

TALLAHASSEE, FL - The Florida Senate unanimously passed legislation today that alters the membership of the Low Income Pool (LIP) Council by prohibiting lobbyists who are not employed full-time by a public entity from serving on the Council and increases the membership of the Council from 17 to 24 members. The Senate joins the House in approving House Bill (HB) 285, sponsored by Representative Jimmy Patronis (R-Panama City). HB 285 will now go to Governor Crist for his approval.

"In unanimously supporting HB 285, the Florida House and Senate sent a strong message – that our limited LIP Council funds should be protected from the influence of Tallahassee insiders," said Representative Patronis. "I hope the Governor quickly signs this bill, which will enable the Legislature to receive unbiased information about the best way to use taxpayers' dollars."

The LIP Council provides direct payments and distributions to hospitals and other health care providers in Florida for care provided to uninsured Floridians. It was created in 2005 when the Legislature authorized the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) to apply for a Medicaid reform waiver contingent on the ability of the state to maintain supplemental payments to hospitals. Florida law required AHCA to establish a LIP Council to provide advice and recommendations to AHCA and the Legislature regarding the distribution of funds each year. Current law does not prohibit lobbyists, including those who lobby on behalf of health care providers receiving LIP funding, from serving on the Council.

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